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Asynchronous Training for Online Teaching Assistants

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A final project presented to the faculty of the
Instructional Design Master's Degree Program
University of Massachusetts at Boston

ASYNCHRONOUS TRAINING FOR ONLINE TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Submitted by
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in partial fulfillment for the requirement of the degree
MASTER OF EDUCATION

April 25, 2021

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Approved by Dr. Carol Ann Sharicz, Faculty

Abstract

The University of Massachusetts Boston (UMB) eLearning and Instructional Design (eLID) team provides technical support to faculty and teaching assistants (TAs) as they teach online courses. There is currently a lack of support for TAs to properly train them to handle the technical tasks designated to them by faculty. This lack of education results in an increased workload on the eLID team in responding to TAs. Research was conducted to determine what the common duties of TAs are and what roles they should be able to fulfill at UMB. In addition, research was used to determine the best method of engaging TAs in an asynchronous format. Using the findings, it was determined to build an asynchronous course in the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS) to train TAs for online courses. Seven main areas of focus were determined to be the most common issues encountered by TAs in their duties, both in Blackboard and in Zoom Video Conferencing: 1) the UMB course template, 2) announcements and discussions, 3) rubrics and assignments, 4) full grade center and needs grading, 5) grading discussion boards and assignments, 6) scheduling within Zoom, and 7) managing Zoom sessions. A series of microlearnings were developed, containing videos, webpages, and written documentation to teach TAs how to complete these common tasks autonomously. These lessons were implemented via a course within the UMB Blackboard LMS. A plan to evaluate the effectiveness of this course for the future is also discussed.

Keywords: teaching assistant, asynchronous, online, Blackboard, microlearning

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Asynchronous Training for Online Teaching Assistants

Overview of Organization

The University of Massachusetts Boston is a public university that has over 16,000 students, both graduate and undergraduate. In the last year, the entire university has gone from having mostly in person classes to having a complete online and remote curriculum. At the center of this is the eLearning and Instructional Design (eLID) team, which consists of ten staff and multiple graduate assistants. The goal of this team is to provide technological and pedagogical support to faculty and support student success by helping faculty address new ways to engage their students. They are responsible for teaching faculty how to use online course elements such as grading within the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS) or the different functions in a live synchronous session using Zoom.

Problem Statement

Within the university, there is a large population of professors who have Teaching Assistants (TAs) whom are not adequately trained in using the learning technology available to faculty. Because their TAs are not always well-versed with different learning technologies, the faculty often turn to the eLID team for assistance. Much of the information is repeated with each of these faculty members, often multiple times in the same semester or from one semester to the next. In a time when most professors are new to using these online technologies, there needs to be a dedicated training for TAs so that they can resolve issues for faculty. This will reduce the increasingly overwhelming workload of the eLID team.

Needs Assessment

The three main avenues for the needs assessment for this course were to conduct a survey of current semester TAs (see Appendix A), interview members of the eLID team for their

personal experience with TAs and professors (see Appendix B) and review previous work tickets that involved TAs within the ticket system at UMB. Through looking at these three areas, the goal was to establish what kinds of duties are assigned to TAs and what issues they encounter. It was also important to see what the expectations are for TAs from both professors and the eLID team. The eLID team needs to consistently repeat information to both TAs and professors related to fundamental tasks within the Blackboard course. Having to repeat this information causes an overwhelming workload for the eLID team, who have other larger issues that require their attention amid the ongoing pandemic. The instructional goals are as follows:

- Educate TAs on essential duties to reduce professor downtime when building Blackboard courses and reduce the active eLID team support needed for these classes.
- Build a depository of reference resources for TAs during the semester as a first-level troubleshooting solution.
- Teach TAs the recommended ways to manage online classes for a consistent student experience across all UMB courses.

The target audience are both graduate and undergraduate students at a university level who are taking on roles as TAs. Based on the study by Miller et al. (2020) “it is important for instructors to obtain an understanding of students’ technological abilities prior to starting an online course to determine how much additional technology support may be needed” (p. 13). They found in their results that students reported “that technology was a barrier to their learning” (Miller et al., 2020, p. 13). To account for this, the TAs surveyed in this needs assessment were asked how much experience they had with the different technologies with five different levels of experience from none to expert. Over 75% of TAs surveyed reported having average or above average skills with both Blackboard and Zoom. In addition to this, at least 97% of TAs reported that they were

currently able to troubleshoot technical issues with no problems or by finding the answer on their own. Aside from the technical background questions, TAs were also asked to identify the different types of duties available in both Zoom and Blackboard courses, among them being building items in the Blackboard course shell, grading student deliverables, and managing different aspects of the Zoom sessions. Through this survey, it became apparent what the most common duties of TAs were based on their experiences and each of those more common ones will be addressed in the design of the training.

When interviewing the members of the eLID team, one of the most important considerations was to speak with the instructional designer who developed a similar course that is being used by instructors themselves, called the Teach Online course. It was important to the design of this course to maintain a consistent aesthetic between the two courses, but still allow each to have distinct training elements. Much of the information gathered by this first interview was reinforcing the results of the survey, in that grading and managing student deliverables and the Blackboard Grade Center were the first item discussed. Beyond that, the instructional designer also noted how there needs to be a place for TAs to go to find all available resources for them in one central location. They discussed the possibility of using the Resources area of the course being developed to serve this purpose for TAs. The instructional designer also expressed a desire that the course content be developed with the mindset that the materials would be used to reinforce what the instructors themselves were taught in their own course for online teaching. The other member of the eLID interviewed expressed similar desires and issues that were brought up. This instructional designer placed more emphasis on the Grade Center being a huge part of the toolkit needed for TAs and mentioned teaching TAs how to use the different items available to them, such as announcements.

The final area was reviewing the previous tickets in the work ticket system at UMB. After looking at the results of the survey and speaking with the eLID instructional designer team members, it became apparent that many of the issues were related to grading Blackboard and managing live sessions in Zoom. The tickets in the work ticket system lend further emphasis to these areas. In addition to these issues, some of the TA tickets were more focused on technical issues in using software and often required only providing them with where to look for steps resolving an issue. This would be where having the Resources section of the course would be beneficial, as TAs could constantly refer to this area to find the appropriate aid as a first level troubleshooting step.

In keeping all this feedback in mind, specifically the desire to have the course serve as a compliment to the Teaching and Learning Online course for instructors, this new course is going to be designed as a shorter, more focused Blackboard course. There will be content folders for each lesson with different types of content. By building this as a Blackboard course, it can be carried forward from semester to semester for each new incoming group of TAs easily, and not need to be rebuilt each time.

Performance Objectives

Upon completion of this course, TAs at UMB will be able to autonomously:

- resolve over 75% of issues encountered by their professors when using Zoom Video Conferencing Software.
- assist professors in building necessary content within a Blackboard LMS course shell.
- grade student deliverables and manage the Full Grade Center in a Blackboard LMS course shell.

- find resolutions to common technology issues encountered in online courses using provided reference resources.

Instructional Strategy

This course is going to be divided into seven lessons that represent the most important and common duties of TAs as found by the previously discussed needs assessment. These lessons will each have their own folder within the Blackboard course that contain the same essential elements. Among those elements will be stated learning objectives and a checklist for what is expected to be completed as part of that lesson. The research by Choi (2016) found that “learning content...should be presented in such ways that learners can plan, monitor and regulate such activities” (p. 10). Choi (2016) defines this as allowing use of a metacognitive strategy and the results of their study found that elements of metacognitive strategy “led to learners’ satisfaction in the online learning environment” (p. 10) to a significant degree. If the learners can see what needs to be completed upfront, they can plan to complete all those elements on their own time without feeling pressured or rushed.

When building the content for this course, it is important to keep in mind that the TAs are not designing the course they are assigned to; they are merely managing the content as directed by the instructor. Research from Fadia & Fresko (2020) with a group of graduate TAs noted that the “least discussed topics [between instructors and TAs] are related to teaching pedagogy” and that regarding the TA’s job responsibilities “familiarity with the syllabus was the most discussed aspect” (p. 553). Common items on a syllabus are the schedules of class content, communication methods between instructors and students and, above all else, the grading schemas for the class. With that in mind, the content in this course will be designed to focus on those elements of the course specifically. In the lesson regarding building content in Blackboard, the focus will be on

the how, and not the why, of building the items. This will focus on instructing TAs about the standard practices used within the UMB online course design and how to take information from an instructor and best deliver it to the students. The entire lesson on grading student deliverables will focus on getting the grade center in Blackboard to match with what the professor expects from their grading schema on their syllabus.

In another study, Choi (2018) found that real-life examples “recognize the importance of using authentic content that can be emotional...examples come from instructors’ life experiences, and, through reflection, they can reveal their genuine emotion. By being vulnerable to students, [students] can feel connected to their instructors” (p. 58). During this course, it will, therefore, be crucial to include as many real-life experiences as possible when building content. As an example, in building a video of using Zoom breakout rooms, instead of just showing rooms called 1, 2, and 3, a story could be told where the instructor wants to split the students up into discussion groups with specific topics and each room could be named based on that.

Since a large portion of this course is going to be focused on performing tasks within an online environment, the decision is being made to employ a large amount of video instruction. When using a new piece of software, often it can be confusing to try to follow written instructions with subpar visuals. By using videos, it will allow for employing the multimedia principle of design to access both the visual and auditory channels of the learners, thereby increasing their chance for retention of the information. The cursor on the screen can be highlighted to draw the attention of the learners to where they need to click while the narrator speaks. It also shows the learners what the entire screen they are going to see will look like, thereby immersing them in the content more directly. In building the videos, it will be important to pay special attention to the editing done, as according to Choi (2018), “students are immersed

in online videos [today]...and understand what makes a good video” (pp. 58-59). If the videos are edited poorly, it could cause an inverse effect and cause students to not consider the narrator an expert on the subject and disinterest them in the materials.

The study by Zanjani et al. (2016) of both students and teachers found that there is a “need for designing a series of online activities that do not limit students’ engagement to the lecture theatre, and...provide opportunities for them to be more involved with what they are studying” (p. 522). As a result of this, merely building lecture videos is not sufficient for making the course be engaging to students. To add variety, the course will also utilize a discussion board where students can interact with each other for questions both during and after the course has been completed, as well as having the TAs complete ungraded, formative assessments in a private practice shell that can only be viewed by the course manager and the TA. As reported by the study by Miller et al. (2020), learners “noted that they valued quality instruction involving timely feedback and formative assessment” (p. 10). The course will accomplish this by including an ungraded reflection assignment at the end of each lesson asking for feedback from the TAs and providing a space for them to interact with the course manager in a positive way about the topics covered in that lesson. The course manager will then respond to the TAs quickly and answer any questions that were brought up.

The course will not have a large amount of direct contact between the TAs themselves. According to the study by Schroeder et al. (2016):

When asked how much connectivity they desired with their advisor, instructors, students, and the program as whole, it was evident that students desired very high connectivity with their instructors (48% of students indicated “very high”)...with few wanting high connectivity with other students in the program (12%). (p. 254)

As all TAs are students at UMB, this research points to a desire among these TAs as learners to focus on the connection between the TA and the course manager. To address this area, the course manager will have standing times each week that serve as a virtual office hour where TAs can come to ask questions in real time, as opposed to waiting for an asynchronous response. The course manager will also be available for booking meetings with each TA to quickly go over any questions that arise. Schroeder et al.'s (2016) research found that this presence of the instructor “may be *the* most important relationship an online learner has” (p. 261), so it is imperative to give ample opportunities to develop that relationship.

Development of Materials

The course itself is built as its own course within the Blackboard LMS, titled Teaching Assistant Online Training Course (see Appendix C). The course uses the standard template that is used by all courses at UMB to keep navigation consistent with experiences the TAs already have as students in their studies. The course was originally designed to contain three lessons, one each based on building Blackboard content, grading Blackboard content, and managing Zoom class sessions. As the course was being developed, discussions with the eLID team led to the decision to split these three lessons into seven total smaller lessons. This is in keeping with the design of the already existent Teaching and Learning Online course for professors, which has the content broken into much smaller segments. Each of these lessons will contain content ranging from links to external resources to microlearning videos that were built using SnagIt, a screen capture software, and then edited using Shotcut, a video editing software, and Audacity, an audio editing software. The videos were then hosted on YouTube as unlisted and embedded within the Blackboard course. In addition to the seven lessons being developed, there is also a section of resources available to the TAs in the course. The resources section will contain external website

links to use as references both during and after completion of the course. Examples of the materials here include links to the Blackboard Help website and the UMB eLID webpage. Each lesson will start with a list of the objectives for that course as one item and then will have a checklist of what TAs need to do to complete that lesson.

State Here (Syllabus)

The first content area that TAs will be directed to is the Start Here (Syllabus) area (see Appendix D). This area contains a course orientation video, a welcome message, the communication policy, a link to the question-and-answer discussion forum, and a link to the course syllabus (see Appendix E).

Weekly Sessions

The Weekly Sessions area of the course contains all seven individual lessons within the course. Each lesson is given its own folder within this content area (see Appendix F). Each Lesson in the Weekly Sessions contains items labeled Overview and Objectives and To Do List. Each lesson also contains a link to the next lesson to make it easier for students to progress forward. Beyond those three standard items, there is additional content as outlined below.

Lesson 1: Blackboard Orientation

For the first lesson in the course, TAs will be taught the standard UMB template of a Blackboard Course. In addition to the standard items, this contains a video introduction to the UMB template with additional notes and a detailed description of the UMB template Course Menu (see Appendix G).

Lesson 2: Announcements and Discussions

The second lesson teaches TAs how to properly build announcements and discussion forums within a Blackboard course. Accompanying the standard items are two newly created

microlearnings showing the process to create an announcement and a discussion forum. Each of these videos is also followed by an activity for the TAs to complete in their practice course shell (see Appendix H). These activities are designed to reinforce what is presented in the videos and to give TAs hands-on experience with the subject matter.

Lesson 3: Rubrics and Assignments

This lesson teaches TAs how to properly build both a rubric and an assignment within the Blackboard course. It contains short videos for both topics, as well as activities for each process that the TAs are to complete in their practice course. There is also the first of three total reflection assignments that the TAs need to complete as part of this entire course. This assignment reflects on everything from lessons one, two, and three (see Appendix I).

Lesson 4: Full Grade Center and Needs Grading

This lesson provides information about the Needs Grading area of a Blackboard course and compares it to the Full Grade Center area of the course. There are also external links to the official Blackboard Help page on the topic of Needs Grading and the Full Grade Center. In addition to these links, there is a video with an overview of the Full Grade Center. The last item is an activity for the students to complete in their practice course shell to become familiar with using the Full Grade Center and the Needs Grading area (see Appendix J).

Lesson 5: Grading Discussion Boards and Assignments

In addition to the standard items, this lesson contains a video on how to grade a discussion board, a link to the Blackboard Help webpage that provides a detailed overview of grading an assignment, an activity for TAs to complete for both new functions, and the second of three assignments to be turned in for this course (see Appendix K). TAs are asked to reflect on the grading process from this lesson before moving on to the next lesson.

Lesson 6: Scheduling with Zoom Video Conferencing

The second to last lesson begins by showing TAs how to properly schedule Zoom meetings so that they are viewable to all students within a course. There are two videos, as the process is different depending on whether it is a Zoom meeting specific to a single section of a class, or if it should be available to multiple sections of the course. The activity for this lesson is to then schedule two different meetings in Zoom, one for their practice course shell and one outside of that course shell (see Appendix L).

Lesson 7: Managing Zoom Video Conferencing Sessions

The final lesson teaches TAs how to manage live Zoom Video Conferencing sessions through microlearnings on three different topics: managing the participants, managing the chat, and managing breakout rooms. After watching the videos, TAs are instructed to conduct a meeting in Zoom on their own, either with friends or family or with fellow TAs, to practice the information shown. They are also allowed to have their own Zoom meeting where they join via multiple devices and practice by interacting with placeholder participants. Finally, students will submit their third written reflection, which is a reflection on the entire course, not just on the Zoom Video Conferencing lessons (see Appendix M).

Course Materials

This section contains links to resources that TAs are encouraged to use both during the course itself and as a reference after course completion and in the course of their duties as a TA. The links contained are to a 24/7 support page for students, the UMB eLID website, the UMB Zoom help webpage and the Blackboard Help webpage (see Appendix N).

Discussions

There are two discussion forums available to the TAs in the course. The first is a forum where they can ask questions of the eLID team, which will also be visible to fellow TAs and the second is a place where TAs are encouraged to share their own tips, tricks, helpful tools, etc., that they found while completing the course (see Appendix O).

Proposed Implementation Plan

To implement this training course, TAs who are going to be assisting with completely online courses at UMB should be identified and enrolled within this course. With a summer semester having less courses, it could be ideal to use this smaller sample size as a pilot of the program and then adjust for the much larger enrollments in the fall semester. The TAs should be enrolled prior to the start of the semester if possible so that they can complete the lessons without needing to focus on managing a live class at the same time. Doing so will allow the TAs to fully engage with the materials without competing priorities. There should be at least one member of the eLID team that is charged with managing and responding to the TAs within the course. It would be beneficial to split the responsibilities among multiple different team members since the workload is already overwhelming at times. The recommendation is that, to allow the eLID members to interact with the TAs practice courses in a timely manner, they develop standard templates that can be submitted to the discussion boards and assignments that the TAs are asked to create, thereby reducing downtime for the TAs in the course.

Evaluation

In evaluating this course, the first level that Kirkpatrick discusses of reaction is accomplished through the built-in assessments of the course, the three submitted reflection

assignments. From these open-ended and formative assessments, levels of success or failure can be found.

The second level of evaluation that Kirkpatrick discusses is learning. Again, this course has activities that are part of the lessons and test the learning of the TAs. By going into each practice course as part of the review associated to each reflection, the eLID team will be able to see if TAs were successful in completing the tasks and identify possible mistakes.

Managing the behavior, the third level of Kirkpatrick's evaluation, can be done after the initial rollout of the course to TAs. In the semester that follows implementing the course, the eLID team will be able to monitor whether TAs are opening tickets on items that were covered in the course. If they are, then it can be determined that their behavior is not changing, despite having learned the content. If you see less tickets opened involving TAs or the content covered in the course, then the behavior is likely to have changed among that population.

For the final level of Kirkpatrick's model, results, looking at actual numbers of tickets is important. In addition to looking at the types of tickets being opened, such as discussed in level three, it will be necessary to track the total number of tickets being opened and see if the number drops in comparison to past semesters. Another key indicator is going to be reviewing the amount of time that the eLID team is spending on answering tickets. With the overall goal being to reduce burden on the team, conducting interviews with members will be vital to see if their stress as it relates to tickets has been reduced by using this program.

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<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.lib.umb.edu/10.1007/s40299-016-0277-2>

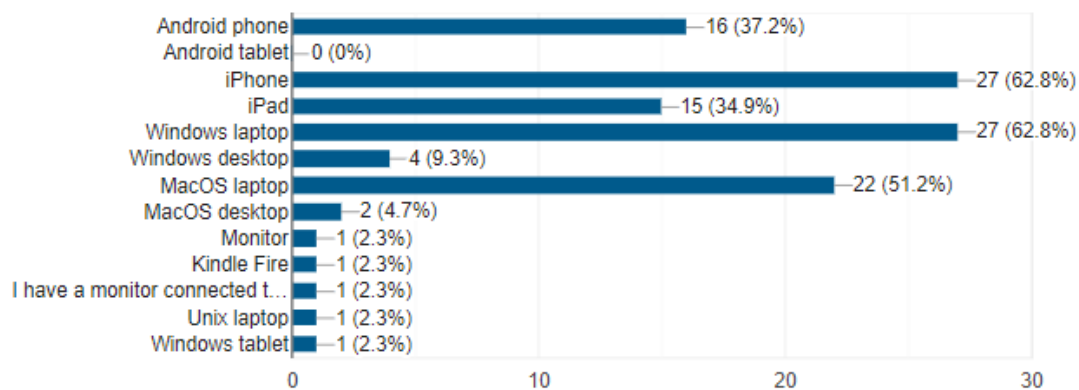
Appendices

Appendix A

Teaching Assistant Survey Questions and Responses

Which types of devices do you have access to at home? Select all

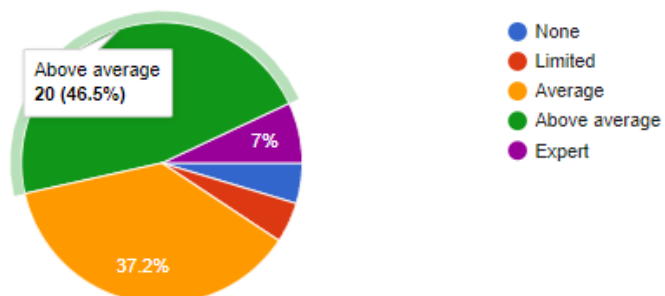
43 responses



Prior Experience

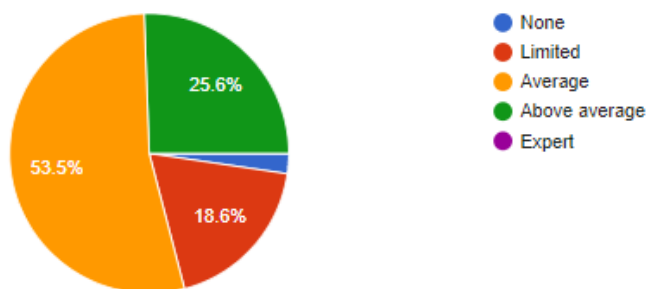
What level of experience do you have with Blackboard as a student?

43 responses



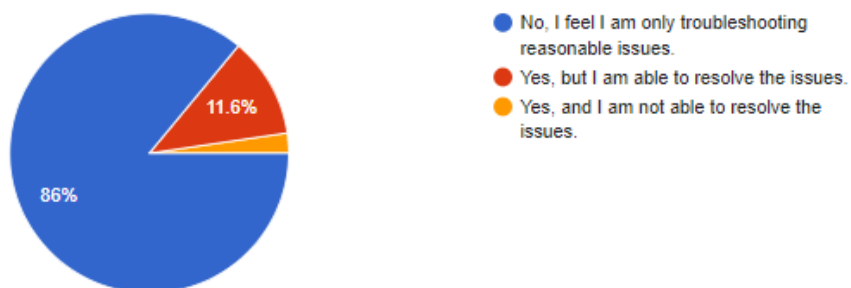
What level of experience do you have working with Blackboard as a builder/instructor?

43 responses



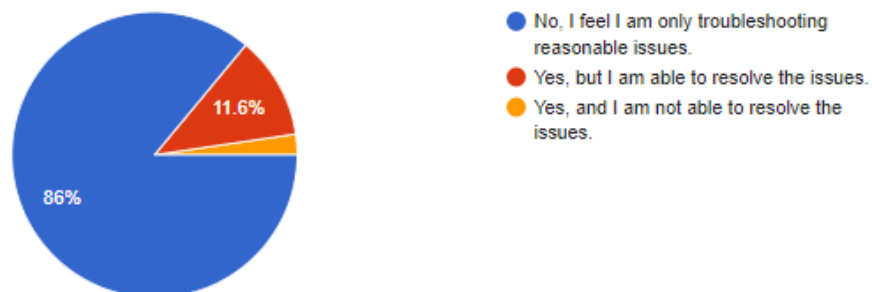
Are you being asked to troubleshoot technical issues for students beyond what you consider to be reasonable?

43 responses



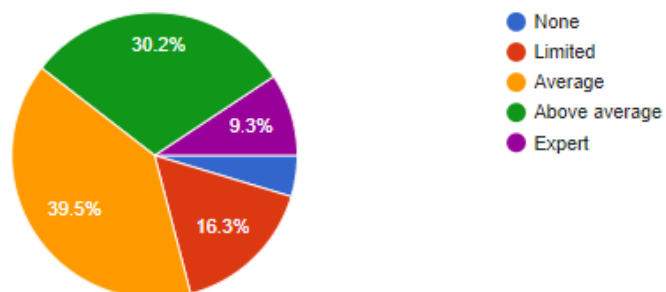
Are you being asked to troubleshoot technical issues for professors beyond what you consider to be reasonable?

43 responses



What level of knowledge do you have with Zoom Video Conferencing as a Host/Co-Host?

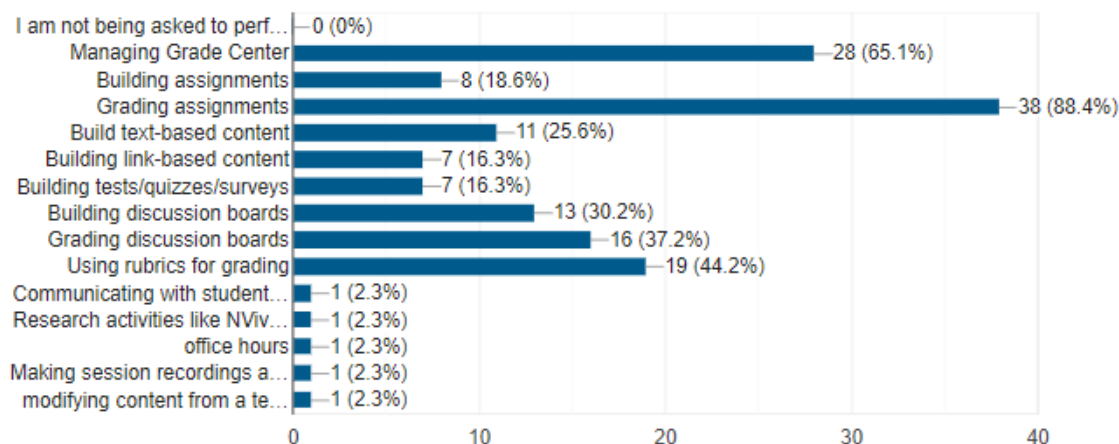
43 responses



Course Duties

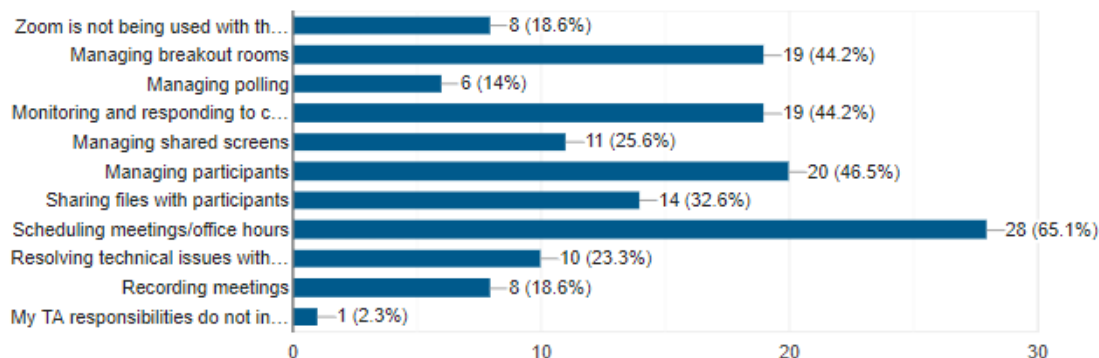
Please select all duties you are being asked to perform in the Blackboard course.

43 responses



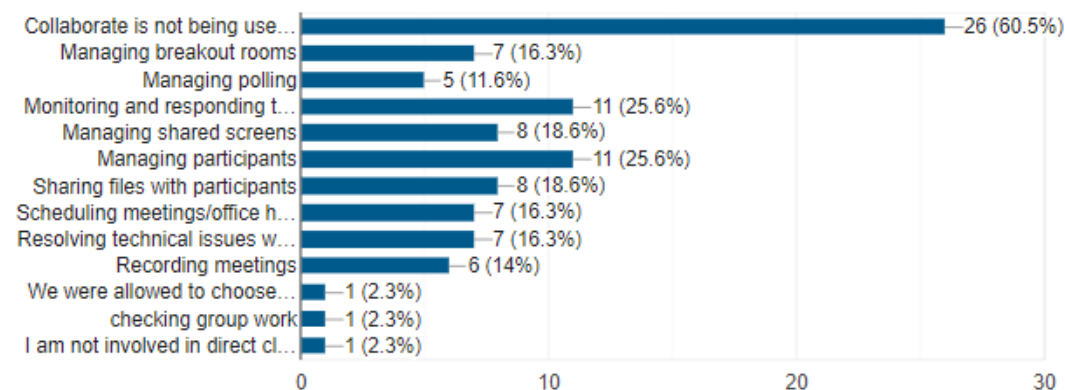
Please select all duties you are being asked to perform for Zoom Video Conferencing class sessions.

43 responses



Please select all duties you are being asked to perform for Blackboard Collaborate class sessions.

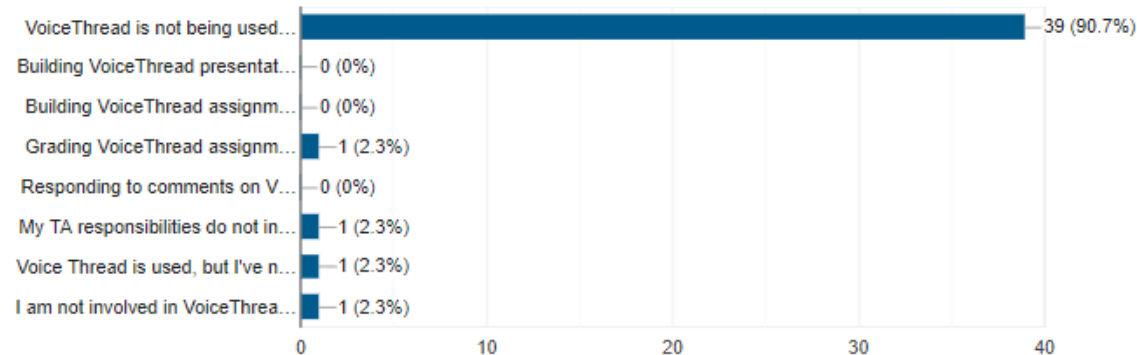
43 responses




Please select all duties you are asked to perform in regards to VoiceThreads in the course.

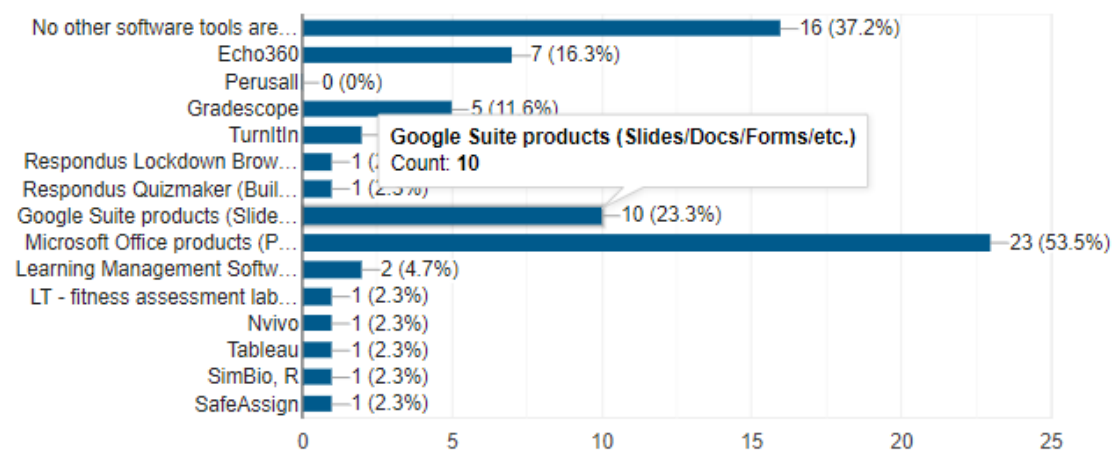


43 responses



Please select all other types of software you are asked to use as part of courses you support. 

43 responses



Please describe which Google Suite, Microsoft Office, or Learning Management Software you have to work with. If you are not supporting any of these, you may skip this question.

18 responses

Word, Excel

Word

Word, google drive, outlook, google docs, google sheets

N/A

google- sheet and ppt. Microsoft- ppt, excel, word

Word, Excel, PowerPoint

Google Slides, Docs, and Spreadsheets; Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel; TopHat

PowerPoint and Excel

I sometimes use excel to sort grades or adjust them into percentage form etc before entering them

Final Questions

Are there any other roles/duties that you are being asked to perform or software that you are being asked to support that were not covered here? If so, please describe them.

13 responses

No

None

no

Qualtrics - not a problem on my end I've used it before

I am responsible for teaching R/RStudio

I supported Online GIS (through ESRI), but this was for a GIS Weekend Workshop.

Taking attendance, making class announcements, answering emails

Teach an online lab.

I support my professor with her research. So I work on NVivo

Are there any other parts of your duties that you wish you had been trained on when you started this semester?

16 responses

No

N/A

no

None

Not that I can think of.

I would have liked an introduction to the capabilities of the discussion board. I think I am an outlier for TAs; my work has been mostly outside of Blackboard. I have supported two sessions at the graduate level: a small (8 people) PhD level course where I provide support off of blackboard; a graduate-level weekend workshop that focused on software (Online GIS).

NO

Last semester I had to learn how to create a self-grading quiz on blackboard. I had never used blackboard

Appendix B

eLID Team Interview Questions

- 1) What kinds of questions do you recall when you have worked with professors regarding their TAs?
- 2) What kinds of questions have you received from TAs directly?
- 3) What kinds of questions from professors do you feel should be able to be handled by their TAs?
- 4) How do you feel regarding TA knowledge about the Grade Center?
- 5) What resources should be provided to TAs as a first step in troubleshooting?
- 6) Any other topics that you feel are important for all TAs to know in supporting online courses?

Appendix C

Blackboard Course Homepage

The screenshot displays the Blackboard Course Homepage for the "Teaching Assistant Online Training Course". The interface is divided into several sections:

- Top Navigation Bar:** Includes the UMass Boston logo, navigation links for "My UMass Boston for Faculty", "My UMass Boston for Students", "Content Collection", "System Admin", and "Outcomes Assessment", a "Help" button, and a user profile for "Jason Shellings".
- Left Sidebar:** Contains a "Home" link and a "Teaching Assistant Online Training Course" menu with sub-links: "Home", "Start Here (Syllabus)", "Weekly Sessions", "Course Materials", and "My Grades". Below this is a "COURSE MANAGEMENT" section with a "Control Panel" and links to "Content Collection", "Course Tools", "Evaluation", "Grade Center", "Users and Groups", "Customization", "Packages and Utilities", and "Help". A "Quick Unenroll" button is at the bottom.
- Main Content Area:**
 - Welcome Banner:** A blue banner with the text "Welcome to the Teaching Assistant Online Training Course".
 - Home Section:** A grey bar with a "Home" dropdown and an "Add Course Module" button.
 - My Announcements:** A section titled "My Announcements" showing a welcome message and a link to "more announcements...".
 - What's New:** A section titled "What's New" showing a list of items: "Announcements (1)", "Assignments (3)", and "Other new content (41)". It includes "Edit Notification Settings" and "Actions" buttons.
 - LinkedIn Learning:** A section titled "LinkedIn Learning" featuring the LinkedIn Learning logo.
 - To Do:** A section titled "To Do" showing a "What's Past Due" section with a link to "All Items (0)". Below this is a "What's Due" section with a "Select Date" dropdown set to "04/24/2021" and a "Go" button. It lists "Today (0)", "Tomorrow (0)", "This Week (0)", and "Future (0)".

Appendix D

Start Here (Syllabus) Content Area

The screenshot displays the 'Start Here (Syllabus)' content area of the UMass Boston online training course. The interface includes a sidebar on the left with navigation links and a main content area on the right.

Sidebar (Left):

- Teaching Assistant Online Training Course
 - Home
 - Start Here (Syllabus)
 - Weekly Sessions
 - Course Materials
 - My Grades
- Announcements
- Discussions
- Web Conferencing
- Web Conferencing- Zoom
- Email (External)

Course Management (Left):

- Control Panel
- Content Collection
- Course Tools
- Evaluation
- Grade Center
- Users and Groups
- Customization
- Packages and Utilities
- Help

Main Content Area (Right):

Start Here (Syllabus)

Welcome to the Teaching Assistant Online Course

Welcome to the Teaching Assistant Online Training Course

Enabled Review

The eLearning and Instructional Design team is happy to have you in this course. We've designed this course specifically for students who are scheduled to be teaching assistants in a fully online course in an upcoming semester. We will introduce you to resources and best practices for helping manage the online course.

Get Started

Here is a list of components to complete as part of introductory activities:

- Read this Welcome to the Course message
- Watch the Welcome to the Course video
- Read the Communication Policy
- Read the Course Syllabus

Communication Policy

Enabled Review

Please post all course-related questions to the Course Q&A discussion forum so all participants benefit from the exchange of information. For private communication please email the facilitators at our individual email addresses or at elearning@umb.edu. We normally check into the course at least two times each work day, morning and afternoon. We will reply to you within 24 hours or sooner.

We will also have a weekly one-hour Zoom session that can be attended to ask questions of a live eLearning team staff member. This session will be available from the Course Menu on the left and is purely for Teaching Assistants to come and ask for assistance directly from the eLearning team.

Syllabus: Teaching Assistant Online Training Course

Enabled Review

Please review the linked syllabus and select the Mark Reviewed option below this link.

Course Questions and Answers

Please post any questions you have about this course in this forum instead of sending me an e-mail. This way the entire class will benefit from this exchange. You can either use this link to go to the Q&A discussion forum, or you can navigate there using the Discussions link from the Course Menu on the left of the screen.

Appendix E

Course Syllabus

Syllabus: Teaching Assistant Online Training Course

Course Description

Teaching Assistant Online Training Course is a course for UMass Boston students who are new to teaching online and will be a Teaching Assistant (TA) in an upcoming semester. The course introduces how to employ recommended tools and methods for using a Blackboard course shell.

As a participant in this course, you will be given a practice Blackboard course where you can freely experiment with what is being taught. You will experience the course as an online learner to understand more fully how the courses that are built by faculty are made.

Upon completion of this course, you will have practiced core elements of the work that you will be asked to complete in your role as a TA.

Course Objectives

Upon completing this course, you will be able to:

- Relate to the experience of an online learner.
- Build items within a Blackboard course.
- Complete grading of student submissions in Blackboard.
- Assist faculty in scheduling and managing Zoom class sessions.

Facilitator Information

This course is facilitated by members of eLearning and Instructional Support. You can reach us at elearning@umb.edu during regular business hours (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm).

The designated facilitators for the week will communicate with you using the tools available in Blackboard and will check in the course at least once a day. There will also be a designated weekly office hour for only TAs to attend to ask questions in real time of an eLearning team staff member.

Course Format

The Teaching Assistant Online Training Course is delivered exclusively online in Blackboard – UMass Boston's Learning Management System – available at umb.umassonline.net. The course is based on best practices for online learning and serves as an example of an online course to be experienced from the student perspective.

Each lesson you will explore one primary topic related to your role as a TA which contains learning materials to review (items to read, video clips to watch) and one or two tasks to complete in your own personal course practice shell. Main links to the lesson units will be available on the under Weekly Sessions on the Course Menu (side-bar on the left of the Blackboard course interface).

Communication

All course communication will be conducted using the tools available in the course on Blackboard: individual feedback for assignments, a Q&A discussion forum and a weekly virtual office hour. Course announcements will be sent out to student UMass Boston email addresses periodically, to model best practices in facilitation and encourage participants to complete assignments and participate in the course.

- You are encouraged to check your UMass Boston Email for periodic announcements sent from the course and use UMass Boston Email for any private course communication with the facilitators.
- You are expected to regularly log on to the Blackboard course and follow the prompts in the course for timely participation and completion of assignments.
- You are encouraged to post any course related questions to the Course Q&A Discussion Forum so all participants benefit from any exchange of public information.

Detailed guidance for participation is provided in the Blackboard course. Additional assistance can be requested and scheduled with the facilitators.

Assessment, Activities and Course Completion

A variety of learning activities will be available in the course for participation and application of the concepts explored in the course.

To fully complete the course and receive a Certificate of Completion, you must submit work to all the activities. Follow the prompts in the unit overview section in each lesson unit for detailed instructions and a list of activities to complete each lesson.

After completing all the exercises in each lesson, an instructional designer will conduct a review of your practice course to ensure that all elements taught in this course are completed satisfactorily. We will provide you with detailed feedback about any suggested improvements and respond to any questions you have before granting you a completion badge.

Digital Badges/Achievements

We are using Blackboard's Achievements tool as an added feature in this course. The Achievements tool allows us to release a Course Completion digital badge and certificate for successful completion of work in the course.

Technical Requirements

You will need an up-to-date desktop or laptop computer with an up-to-date browser (Chrome and Firefox recommended) to successfully participate in the course. We recommend having both Chrome and Firefox browsers installed on your computer for best results.

You will need Word processing software such as MS Word to complete assignments and develop content for your online course. IT Services provides MS Office software to UMB faculty to use for their courses: https://www.umb.edu/it/software/faculty_staff

Technical Assistance

Help with Blackboard

For technical help with Blackboard please use the 24/7 Technical Support resource available through the Help button in Blackboard or directly at: <http://umb.echelp.org> or via phone: 1.855.789.7053

Help with Email

For help with email, software or WISER please contact the IT Service Desk: <https://www.umb.edu/it/help>

Accommodations

Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 offers guidelines for curriculum modifications and adaptations for students with documented disabilities. If applicable, students may obtain adaptation recommendations from the Ross Center for Disability Services, M-1-401, (617-287-7430). The student must present these recommendations and discuss them with each professor within a reasonable period, preferably by the end of the Drop/Add period. For more information see <http://www.rosscenter.umb.edu>.

Student Responsibilities and Conduct

Students are expected to behave in a respectful and civil manner and display academic integrity. Behavior in violation with acceptable online behavior and submitting of dishonest work will result in removal from the course. Students taking this course are required to adhere to the University Policy on Academic Standards and Cheating, to the University Statement on Plagiarism and the Documentation of Written Work, and to the Code of Student Conduct as outlined in the University Catalog and Student Handbook. The Code is available online on the UMB website:

https://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/dean_of_students/students/student_conduct

Additional Information

The information provided in this syllabus is subject to change. The course facilitators will inform participants of any changes through course communication tools.

Appendix F

Weekly Sessions Content Area

The screenshot displays the Blackboard interface for the 'Weekly Sessions' content area. The top navigation bar includes the UMass Boston logo, user information (Jason Snellings), and links to 'My UMass Boston for Faculty', 'My UMass Boston for Students', 'Content Collection', 'System Admin', and 'Outcomes Assessment'. A 'Help' button is also present. The left sidebar contains a 'Teaching Assistant Online Training Course' menu with links to Home, Start Here (Syllabus), Weekly Sessions, Course Materials, and My Grades. Below this is a 'COURSE MANAGEMENT' section with links to Control Panel, Content Collection, Course Tools, Evaluation, Grade Center, Users and Groups, Customization, Packages and Utilities, and Help. A 'Quick Unenroll' button is at the bottom of the sidebar. The main content area is titled 'Weekly Sessions' and features a list of seven lessons, each with a folder icon and a title: Lesson 1: Blackboard Orientation, Lesson 2: Announcements and Discussions, Lesson 3: Rubrics and Assignments (highlighted with a yellow background), Lesson 4: Needs Grading and Full Grade Center, Lesson 5: Grading Discussion Boards and Assignments, Lesson 6: Scheduling with Zoom Video Conferencing, and Lesson 7: Managing Zoom Video Conferencing Sessions. Above the list are tabs for 'Build Content', 'Assessments', 'Tools', and 'Partner Content'. The interface is in 'Edit Mode' which is currently 'ON'.

Appendix G

Lesson 1 Content Area

The screenshot displays the Blackboard LMS interface for a course titled "Lesson 1: Blackboard Orientation". The top navigation bar includes the UMass Boston logo, user information (Jason Shillings), and various utility links like "Help", "My UMass Boston for Faculty", "My UMass Boston for Students", "Content Collection", "System Admin", and "Outcomes Assessment". The left sidebar shows a "Teaching Assistant Online Training Course" menu with options like Home, Start Here (Syllabus), Weekly Sessions, Course Materials, My Grades, Announcements, Discussions, Web Conferencing, and Email (External). Below this is a "COURSE MANAGEMENT" section with links to Control Panel, Content Collection, Course Tools, Evaluation, Grade Center, Users and Groups, Customization, Packages and Utilities, and Help. A "Quick Unenroll" button is also present.

The main content area is titled "Lesson 1: Blackboard Orientation" and contains several sections:

- Overview and Objectives:** For the first lesson of this course, the focus will be on building the more common elements delegated to TAs. We will be showing you the recommended way to build these items so that they remain consistent across all UMB Blackboard courses. By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:
 - Identify the standard items in the UMB Course Menu
 - Explain the importance of maintaining the standard template in courses
- To Do List:** As part of completing this lesson, you will need to:
 - Watch the video called Blackboard and the Course Menu Template
 - Read the detailed description of The UMB Course Menu Structure
- Blackboard and the Course Menu Template:** The course menu is the column that appears along the left side (the top half) of every course site. It is the cornerstone of organization and navigation for all course sites. In this online course site you have been using the course menu to navigate between different course tools and content areas such as, Home, Start Here (Syllabus), and Weekly Sessions, which bring you to content areas like this section you are in right now. Faculty should strive to maintain a simple and clean course menu in order to maintain efficient navigation for students. In all courses taught with Blackboard here at UMass Boston, we preloaded a UMB Template with a course menu structure based on best practices for navigation and to ensure consistency between courses. This training course uses the UMB template. As you review the course built by your faculty members, you may notice they have added more links to tools, content areas, and other features. It is recommended that they do not change this structure too much. This template helps make the course more accessible, and students won't need to learn navigation but can focus on the content instead. If you notice that there are options that appear not to be necessary or that have confusing names, please work with faculty members to correct those concerns. Please watch the video below for an orientation to key areas in Blackboard, and some common operations on the Course Menu.

Below the text is a video player titled "The Course Menu and the UMass Boston Template...".

The bottom section of the page is titled "The UMB Course Menu Structure" and provides detailed information about the course menu components:

- Home:** This is a module page that serves as the course landing page for both students and instructors. It holds the UMB branding and course title. This page gives students access to useful tools like the What's New module which lists new announcements and discussion posts, and the To Do module which lists upcoming due dates. Also, it provides a shortcut to LinkedIn Learning, an incredible database of instructional videos that teach topics such as APA Research Paper Basics, Avoiding Plagiarism, and How to be an Effective Online Student. Students expect all of their courses to have the same landing page. You can add additional modules if you like, but please don't hide the page.
- Start Here (Syllabus):** a content area that holds the course introductory materials, like the welcome message, syllabus, course tour, course policies, etc. Start Here is the area we want students to visit first to get oriented to the course. Think of this area as the first day of class. It is your opportunity to give students all the information they need to be successful in your course.
- Weekly Sessions:** a content area where the weekly units are hosted. It is organized with folders, one folder per week. During a regular semester you will have 12 or 13 folders. We recommend you include all the content students needs for the week in the folder, thus ensuring that no content is ever missed. Folders should be released one at a time to keep all students on the same pace and the grading cycle consistent and manageable.
- Course Materials:** is an extra content area that should be used for course materials that do not fit under weekly sessions. For example, if you have a semester-long project with several components, you could place all components and the assignment in this area and then rename it: Semester Project.
- My Grades:** a tool link that gives students easy and direct access to the grades you have entered for them in the grade center. They see only their own grades, never those of their classmates, and you can hide and show grades in the grade center. This is useful if you would like to hide the first grade until the end of the semester. You can view what grade columns appear for students in the My Grades area by using the Student Preview button.
- Divider:** the horizontal line that separates the top part from the bottom part of the course menu.
- Announcements:** a tool link that you use to send announcements to the class (more about it next week). The same link is also available on the landing page. This menu item offers a simple way to access announcements without having to navigate back to the home page.
- Discussions:** a tool link that provides easy access to the entire threaded discussion board. This link allows students to go directly to any weekly discussion or the Course Q&A without having to navigate to the correct week. It's a shortcut to discussions for both students and instructors.
- Web Conferencing:** a tool link to Collaborate – the native web conferencing tool in Blackboard. This is the tool to use to meet live online with students. Any class meetings should be scheduled ahead with the students, though the tool is always available for students to use to meet with each other to collaborate.
- Email (External):** This tool link gives you access to Blackboard's built-in emailing tool. It is only available for instructors (note the little square with a dash across that indicates the tool is hidden from students). It allows you to send email from within the course to students' UMB email addresses. It is hidden from students to encourage them to use the Course Q&A forum for more streamlined communication in the course, as well as to require students to email you using the method you specified on your syllabus for private matters.

At the bottom of the page, there is a section titled "Lesson 2: Announcements and Discussions".

Appendix H

Lesson 2 Content Area

The screenshot displays the Blackboard interface for a Teaching Assistant Online Training Course. The top navigation bar includes the UMass Boston logo, user information (Jason Shellings), and links to My UMass Boston for Faculty, My UMass Boston for Students, Content Collection, System Admin, and Outcomes Assessment. The left sidebar shows course management options like Control Panel, Content Collection, Course Tools, Evaluation, Grade Center, Users and Groups, Customization, Packages and Utilities, and Help. The main content area is titled "Lesson 2: Announcements and Discussions" and contains the following sections:

- Overview and Objectives:** For the next lesson of this course, the focus will be on building the more common elements delegated to TAs. We will be showing you the recommended way to build these items so that they remain consistent across all UMB Blackboard courses. By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:
 - Create an announcement
 - Create a discussion board
- To Do List:** As part of completing this lesson, you will need to:
 - Watch the short videos for Creating an Announcement and Creating a Discussion Board
 - Build an announcement and a discussion board in your practice shell
- Create an Announcement within Blackboard:** Includes a video player showing a tutorial on how to create an announcement.
- Create an Announcement - Activity:** After watching the video for creating an announcement, create an announcement in your practice shell. The announcement should be a welcome message to students. As part of the announcement include information about yourself such as your educational focus, options for communicating with you and any other fun information you wish to include such as hobbies or favorite types of books/movies/etc. This should be similar to what you may be asked to send to students you are working with as part of your TA duties.
- Create a Discussion Forum within Blackboard:** Includes a video player showing a tutorial on how to create a discussion forum.
- Create a Discussion Board - Activity:** After watching the video for creating a discussion board, create an icebreaker discussion board in your practice shell. An icebreaker is a way to get students to talk to each other to begin developing a rapport with one another. You can make this icebreaker anything that would appeal to you as a student yourself, such as discussing your favorite summertime activities. Make sure that you ask students to give some basic information about themselves as well, such as name and where they live. Ensure that the discussion board is set to be graded, as we will grade this in a later lesson.
- Lesson 3: Rubrics and Assignments**

Appendix I

Lesson 3 Content Area

The screenshot shows the Blackboard interface for a Teaching Assistant Online Training Course. The top navigation bar includes links for My UMass Boston for Faculty, My UMass Boston for Students, Content Collection, System Admin, and Outcomes Assessment. The left sidebar contains a 'Teaching Assistant Online Training Course' menu with links to Home, Start Here (Syllabus), Weekly Sessions, Course Materials, My Grades, Announcements, Discussions, Web Conferencing, Web Conferencing-Zoom, and Email (External). The main content area is titled 'Lesson 3: Rubrics and Assignments' and includes tabs for Build Content, Assessments, Tools, and Partner Content. The content is organized into sections: 'Overview and Objectives' (stating the focus is on building common elements delegated to TAs), 'To Do List' (listing tasks like watching videos, building a rubric, and submitting a reflection), and 'Create a Rubric within Blackboard' (which includes a video player and a 'Watch on YouTube' link).

This screenshot continues the 'Lesson 3: Rubrics and Assignments' content. It includes sections for 'Create a Rubric - Activity' (describing the rubric structure with three rows and three columns), 'Create an Assignment within Blackboard' (with a video player and 'Watch on YouTube' link), 'Create an Assignment - Activity' (describing the assignment creation process), and 'Blackboard Content Creation Reflection' (a reflection activity for the last few lessons). The bottom of the page features a 'Lesson 4: Full Grade Center and Needs Grading' section with a video player and a 'Watch on YouTube' link. A small 'Asynchronous Training L...' window is visible in the bottom right corner.

Appendix J

Lesson 4 Content Area

Lesson 4: Needs Grading and Full Grade Center

Overview and Objectives

This lesson will go over navigating both the Needs Grading area of the course and the Full Grade Center.

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Locate items that need grading
- View and manage the Full Grade Center

To Do List

As part of completing this lesson, you will need to:

- Read the documentation from Blackboard on Needs Grading
- Watch the video about the Full Grade Center
- Practice modifying columns within the Full Grade Center

Needs Grading

Needs Grading is a useful feature that lists student submissions to all graded learning activities as they are submitted in a single location, instead of having to look at the Full Grade Center. You can click on the title of this item to go to the Blackboard Help page titled Navigate Grading for additional information.

To access Needs Grading:

- Click Grade Center from the Control Panel (area just under the Course Menu)
- Click Needs Grading

COURSE MANAGEMENT

- Control Panel
 - Content Collection
 - Course Tools
 - Evaluation
 - Grade Center
 - Users and Groups
 - Customization
 - Packages and Utilities
 - Help

Full Grade Center

View the video below to learn how to perform some common tasks in the Full Grade Center, including showing/hiding columns from students, reorganizing columns, and more. You can also click on the title of this item to be taken to the Blackboard Help page titled Navigate Grading for additional information.

A few tips:

- Columns can be hidden from students and/or from the instructor. This is done separately. If a column is hidden from the instructors, it could still be visible for the students, causing confusion. Make sure to hide a column from students first, before hiding it from yourself.
- Student Preview is your best friend when it comes to viewing what columns are available to students and in what order.
- Your Grade Center should be nicely organized and be aligned with your grading grid in your Syllabus. Be consistent in your naming/labeling of your columns to make it easier to navigate (see this course as an example).

How to Customize the Grade Center

Blackboard Learn Instructor

Watch on YouTube

Full Grade Center - Activity

After reviewing the Needs Grading and Full Grade Center materials in this lesson, take some time to practice making changes in your grade center. You can practice moving columns or hiding and unhiding them. Using the Blackboard Help links, try to do some additional manipulation of the grade center, such as building a new column, or resorting based on different criteria.

Lesson 5: Grading Discussion Boards and Assignments

Appendix K

Lesson 5 Content Area

UMASS BOSTON

My UMass Boston for Faculty | My UMass Boston for Students | Content Collection | System Admin | Outcomes Assessment

Weekly Sessions > Lesson 5: Grading Discussion Boards and Assignments

Lesson 5: Grading Discussion Boards and Assignments

Overview and Objectives

You should now see that in your practice course there are submissions for all of the graded items you built. In this lesson we will go through the process to grade each of these items.

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Grade a discussion board
- Grade an assignment both with and without a rubric

To Do List

As part of completing this lesson, you will need to:

- Read the documentation for grading an assignment
- Watch the video on grading a discussion board
- Grade the discussion board submission in your practice shell
- Grade the assignment submissions, both with and without a rubric in your practice shell
- Submit a reflection on items from this week after completing the activities for this week

Grading Assignments

Review the information provided from Blackboard on how to grade assignments. Note that this page is split into two areas, the original Blackboard view and Ultra. Focus only on the first half of the page that looks at the original view and ignore the sections labeled as Ultra.

Grading Discussion Board within Blackboard

Grading Discussion Board within Blackboard

UMASS BOSTON

My UMass Boston for Faculty | My UMass Boston for Students | Content Collection | System Admin | Outcomes Assessment

Weekly Sessions > Lesson 5: Grading Discussion Boards and Assignments

Grading Discussion Board within Blackboard

Grading Discussion Board within Blackboard

Grade a Discussion Board - Activity

In your practice course, you should now have a discussion board submission for your icebreaker forum waiting to be graded. Navigate to the Needs Grading area of your course to see this submission and go to the attempt that was submitted to grade it. When grading, make sure to include both a number grade and then feedback to the learner. When you first grade, give the grade a lower value and save the entry using the Save Draft option. After doing so, go back to the Needs Grading area to see that since it is in a draft status, that it still needs to be graded. Grade the discussion again, changing the grade and feedback and then Submit that grade. Finally, review the full grade details by going through the Full Grade Center and looking at that grade.

Grade an Assignment - Activity

In your practice course there should now be two assignment submissions visible in the grade center. For grading these assignments, you can choose to go through the Needs Grading area or the Full Grade Center, whichever one you like more. On one of the submissions, grade it without using a rubric; just enter a value for the grade. For the other, grade it using the attached rubric. Confirm both grades appear in the Full Grade Center once the grades are submitted.

Grading Reflection

As a final activity for this lesson, please reflect on the process for each of the activities you were asked to complete. Was there anything that was difficult to navigate in grading? Did the documentation and the links within cause any confusion or did you wish there was something else that was touched upon? Do you feel like you would be able to complete these tasks in the courses you are working with?

You can also use this reflection to ask any questions you have related to any elements of grading that were not covered here. Once you have submitted this reflection, a member of the eLearning team will review what you have written. You will then be able to access the next lesson from the Weekly Sessions Course Menu.

Lesson 6: Scheduling with Zoom Video Conferencing

Appendix L

Lesson 6 Content Area

The screenshot shows the Blackboard interface for a Teaching Assistant Online Training Course. The top navigation bar includes the UMass Boston logo, user information (Jason Shellings), and links to My UMass Boston for Faculty, My UMass Boston for Students, Content Collection, System Admin, and Outcomes Assessment. The breadcrumb trail indicates the current location: Weekly Sessions > Lesson 6: Scheduling with Zoom Video Conferencing.

The left sidebar contains a 'COURSE MANAGEMENT' section with links to Control Panel, Content Collection, Course Tools, Evaluation, Grade Center, Users and Groups, Customization, Packages and Utilities, and Help. A 'Quick Unenroll' button is also present.

The main content area is titled 'Lesson 6: Scheduling with Zoom Video Conferencing'. It includes a 'Build Content' dropdown menu and a 'Tools' dropdown menu. The content is organized into sections:

- Overview and Objectives:** For this lesson of the course, the focus will be on navigating the different elements of scheduling with Zoom Video Conferencing. By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:
 - Assist professors to properly schedule individual class sessions through Blackboard
 - Schedule single Office Hours for access by multiple classes
- To Do List:** As part of completing this lesson, you will need to:
 - Watch the videos on scheduling a Zoom Class Session through Blackboard and Office Hours outside of Blackboard
 - Schedule a recurring class session through Blackboard and an Office Hours session outside of Blackboard
- Scheduling Zoom Class Sessions within a Blackboard Course:** This section contains a video player with the title 'Scheduling Zoom Class Sessions within a Blackboard Course'. Below the video is a 'Watch on YouTube' button.

This screenshot continues the Blackboard interface from the previous one, showing the 'Scheduling Zoom Class Sessions within a Blackboard Course' video player. The video player has a 'Watch on YouTube' button and a 'Watch later' button. Below the video player is a 'Scheduling a Zoom Meeting Outside of Blackboard' section, which also contains a video player with a 'Watch on YouTube' button.

The bottom section of the content area is titled 'Scheduling Zoom Sessions - Activity'. It includes a paragraph of text: 'For this activity, you are going to schedule two different types of Zoom meetings. The first one is going to be a recurring class session that needs to be available only through your practice course. You will need to make sure you book it properly so that student can see the session when clicking on Web Conferencing - Zoom in the course. The second Zoom meeting is going to be a virtual office hours session that you want to make sure is available to anyone, not just those in your practice course. After booking the virtual office hours, add a course menu area link labeled Office Hours and then create an item in that area that holds the meeting information.'

The bottom of the page shows the start of 'Lesson 7: Managing Zoom Video Conferencing Sessions'.

Appendix M

Lesson 7 Content Area

Lesson 7: Managing Zoom Video Conferencing Sessions

Overview and Objectives

For the final lesson of this course, the focus will be on navigating the different elements of Zoom Video Conferencing. The information here will go over the fundamental actions needed when helping manage a Zoom class session. By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Manage participants and chat within Zoom
- Setup and manage breakout rooms in Zoom

To Do List

As part of completing this lesson, you will need to:

- Watch the short videos on managing chat, participants, and breakout rooms within a Zoom session
- Practice using what you have learned about Zoom in a private Zoom meeting
- Submit a reflection on items from this week and the overall course after completing the activities for this week

Managing Participants List within Zoom Video Conferencing

Watch on YouTube

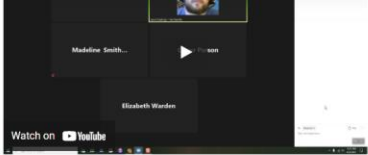
Managing Chat within Zoom Video Conferencing


Watch on YouTube

Managing Breakout Rooms within Zoom Video Conferencing


Watch later Share


[Help](#)






Managing Breakout Rooms within Zoom Video Conferencing





Managing Zoom Sessions - Activity

To practice what you have been shown in a Zoom session, you are being asked to either host a Zoom meeting with friends/family/etc. or to host a meeting alone and log in from multiple devices to the meeting. Then, you will want to practice with managing the chat, participants list, and moving other users to breakout rooms and communicating with them. You can join as a guest via a mobile device or another computer using the invite link on your Zoom meeting. If you have any questions about this process, or run into any issues, please reach out via the Course Q&A Discussion forum.



Final Reflection

As a final activity for this course, please reflect on all of the topics that were covered. Are there any aspects of the course that you wish were expanded upon or any specific topics that were not covered, but you felt should be? Please include any information about how the course was built in terms of navigation and structure, in addition to concerns about the topics covered. If you feel there needs to be more resources, please provide information on what those resources could be. This is an opportunity to both get clarification on any topics you have questions about and to help improve this course for future TAs.

Appendix N

Course Materials Content Area

The screenshot displays the Blackboard interface for a course. At the top, a blue navigation bar includes the UMass Boston logo, user links for 'My UMass Boston for Faculty' and 'My UMass Boston for Students', and system links for 'Content Collection', 'System Admin', and 'Outcomes Assessment'. A 'Help' button is also present. Below this, a 'Course Materials' tab is active, showing a list of resources: 'Student 24/7 Support', 'UMB eLearning and Instructional Design - Tools for Teaching', 'UMB Zoom Video Conferencing Support Page', and 'Blackboard Online Help'. A left-hand sidebar contains a 'Teaching Assistant Online Training Course' menu with links to 'Home', 'Start Here (Syllabus)', 'Weekly Sessions', 'Course Materials', and 'My Grades'. Below this is a 'COURSE MANAGEMENT' section with links to 'Control Panel', 'Content Collection', 'Course Tools', 'Evaluation', 'Grade Center', 'Users and Groups', 'Customization', 'Packages and Utilities', and 'Help'. At the bottom left, a 'Quick Unenroll' button is visible. The main content area has a light gray background with a subtle grid pattern.

Appendix O

Discussions Content Area

UMASS BOSTON

My UMass Boston for Faculty | My UMass Boston for Students | Content Collection | System Admin | Outcomes Assessment

Help | Jason Snellings

Discussion Board

Teaching Assistant
Online Training Course
Home
Start Here (Syllabus)
Weekly Sessions
Course Materials
My Grades

Announcements
Discussions
Web Conferencing II
Web Conferencing- Zoom
Email (External)

Discussion Board
Discussions are a good way to encourage students to think critically about your coursework and interact with each others' ideas. You can create discussions around individual course lessons or for your course in general. [More Help](#)

Create Forum

| Forum | Description | Total Posts | Unread Posts | Unread Replies To Me | Total Participants |
|---|---|-------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Course Questions and Answers | Please post any questions you have about this course in this forum instead of sending me an e-mail. This way the entire class will benefit from this exchange. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helpful Information for Other Students | Use this forum as a place to share anything you find as you work on this course or during the semester. It could be videos you found helpful, resources that you are using or just general tips and tricks you learned as you went through the content. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Displaying 1 to 2 of 2 items | [Show All](#) | [Edit Paging](#)

COURSE MANAGEMENT

- Control Panel
- Content Collection
- Course Tools
- Evaluation
- Grade Center
- Users and Groups
- Customization
- Packages and Utilities
- Help

Quick Unenroll